

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

May 13, 2003

**EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Thousands of young people who live in the Los Angeles County are ready, willing, and able to work, but require assistance to land that first employment opportunity. The funding slated to support workforce attainment activities for youth is predominately through the federally funded *Workforce Investment Act* (WIA) with standards so stringent that many young people are excluded from landing their first job (i.e. must meet poverty criteria and be basic skills deficient, or part of the justice system, or limited English proficient or a single parent.) WIA funding provides a full complement of supportive services for young people who are eligible. However, not all young people seeking employment require all the supportive services available through WIA. Some young people simply need to learn the skills that will help them find employment and connect them with prospective employers— with the current system, we leave so many young people behind.

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Without saying, investment in young people today provides a richer, better-trained workforce for tomorrow. The bottom line is, young people should have the opportunity to be presented with tools to succeed in the workplace.

One resource the County has to offer, committed to having a positive impact on young people's lives, is *LA Youth at Work* (LAYAW), a501(c)3 under the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation. LAYAW's mission is to empower young people ages 16-24 to obtain and retain meaningful employment, and to educate and encourage businesses to invest in their communities by creating employment opportunities for young people. Programming has been guided by the following core goals: (1) to connect businesses to a labor force of qualified young people, (2) to provide Los Angeles area youth with the skills needed to obtain and retain employment, (3) to serve as a clearinghouse for private sector youth employment opportunities, and (4) to build the capacity of other youth serving agencies to better serve their youth and business clients. Since its inception in 1994, over 3000 young people have found employment.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Department of Children and Family Services, Community and Senior Services, the Community Development Commission, the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Chief Administrative Office, become familiar with *LA Youth at Work* and explore all the resources LAYAW has to offer young people ages 16-24 in securing employment opportunities.

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